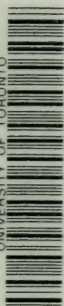


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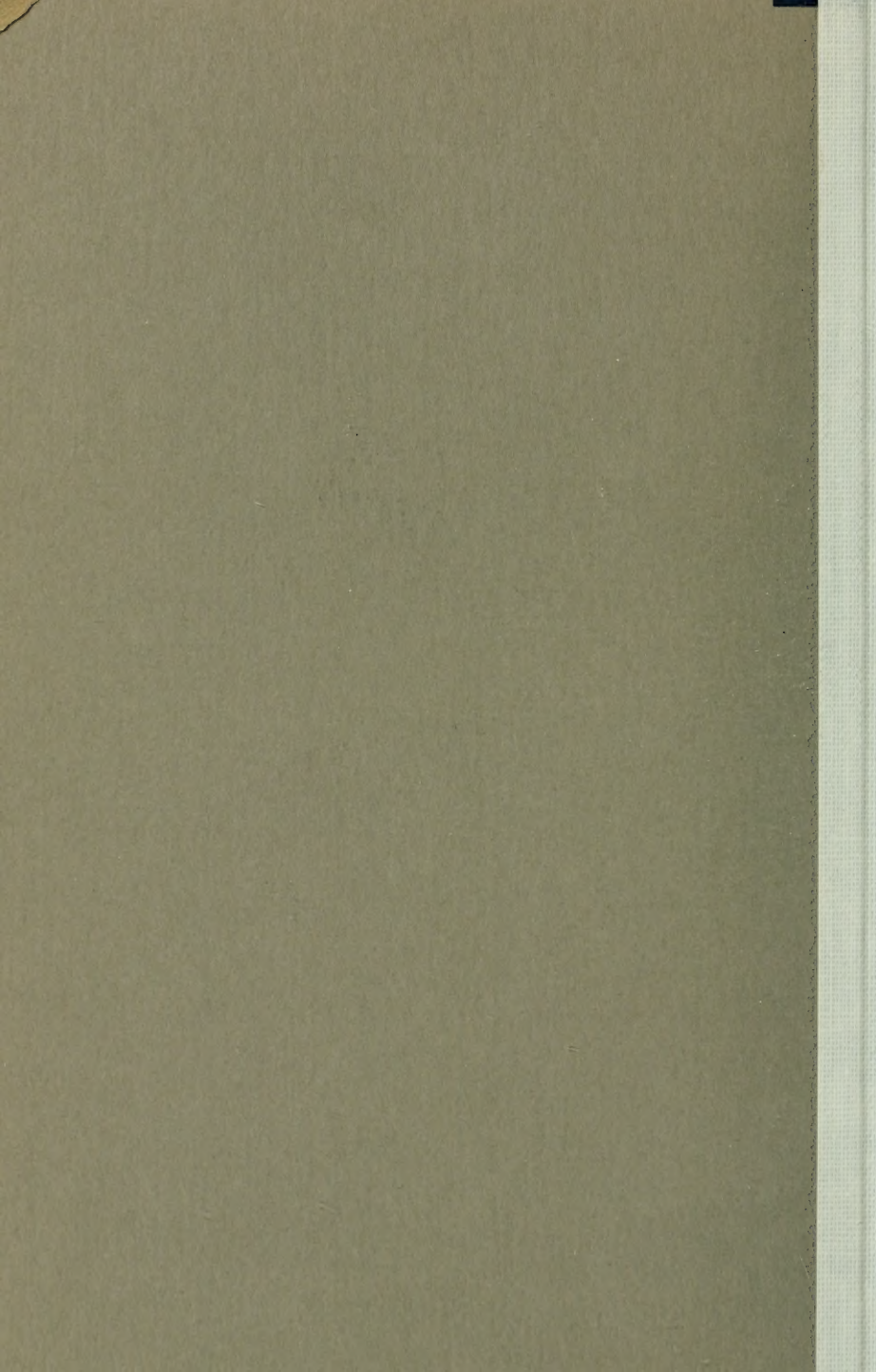
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National Republican Club
Race discrimination

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Race Discrimination

Document No. 72, 1908

THE REPUBLICAN CLUB

Of the City of New York

54-56 West 40th Street

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Report of the Committee on National Affairs

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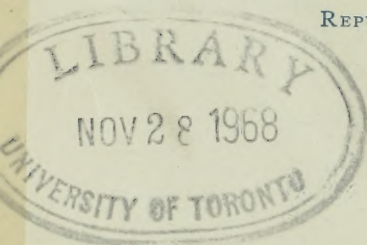
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THE REPUBLICAN CLUB
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RACE DISCRIMINATION.

We appeal to all American citizens to oppose the rising tide of race discrimination that threatens to overwhelm us. The situation is far worse than it was ten years ago.

CARL SCHURZ' PROPHECY.

The late Carl Schurz not long before his death wrote: "Here is the crucial point: There will be a movement either in the direction of reducing the negro to a permanent condition of serfdom—the condition of the mere plantation hand, alongside of the mule, practically without any rights of citizenship, or a movement in the direction of recognizing him as a citizen in the full sense of the term. One or the other will prevail."

Carl Schurz's prediction has become true sooner than he expected. The American people are apparently moving swiftly in the effort to reduce the negro to a permanent position of inferiority. Race discrimination and race hatred are growing by leaps and bounds.

OUR FOREIGN BORN CITIZENS VITALLY INTERESTED.

We urge all by voice and pen and ballot to put down this spirit. Especially do we appeal to our foreign born citizens to join in smiting down this deadly evil.

This is their struggle as well as the negro's. Do they not see that if success should come to those who are striving to separate the people on account of color or race, their turn may come next?

A distinguished Southerner of Louisiana was recently asked: "What will you do if the Italians continue to swarm into the South and secure a majority of the voters in your State?" His answer was: "We will treat them as we have the negro—we

will disfranchise them. The Southern Anglo-Saxon men must rule and shall rule," and in the adjoining State of Mississippi, as we learn from The Associated Press dispatches, the people of several towns have under consideration a plan to expel children of Italian parentage from the public schools.

The importance to the foreign born citizen of the fight, therefore, to give the negro a "square deal," is that if the fight continues to go against him, and the negro is placed permanently in the disfranchised class, there will soon be a demand for discrimination between different classes of immigrants.

The Hebrews, who have been discriminated against for generations, and who now in Russia and Roumania are realizing the awful results of race hatred, surely will be found fighting for justice for all. On what principle of consistency can they encourage our natives to espouse their cause in foreign lands, and fail to do all they can to right the wrongs of native born citizens in this country? The Italians will not be found wanting in this fight when they understand it. The Germans, the Irish, the Scotch, the Scandinavians, the Russians, the Greeks, the Armenians, in fact all nationalities coming to our shores, have histories and traditions that will impel them to be on the side of justice and against oppression.

NATIVE AMERICANS RESPONSIBLE.

The singular and awful fact is that this bitter determination to discriminate against the colored race is chargeable to the native born American. The immigrants have little or none of such prejudice when they come here. In Europe and Asia there is very slight prejudice against a dark skin, and in the West Indies and Central and South America almost none.

It is a sight that lowers this nation in the eyes of the whole world, to see a great and in many ways a highly civilized people like the white people of the United States engage in a cowardly and brutal effort to crush and keep down a race of ten million people.

Let us endeavor to look at the situation from an outsider's standpoint, as it looks to the Canadians and Europeans, and

not as it looks to us, for it is well known that continuous contact with any form of wrong and crime renders persons or peoples hardened and indifferent to it.

CONTEMPT FOR FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

The American people claim to love their Constitution. Oaths to honor and obey it are constantly made, and yet the race discrimination has grown to be so strong that this sacred Constitution is trampled under foot and despised in many States. Two of its amendments, especially the 14th and 15th, are openly defied.

Again, the right of representation is supposed to be inborn in every American. Taxation without representation was the primal cause of our Revolution and separation from the mother country. The Constitution of the Nation and of the forty-six different States, specifically declares against taxation without representation, and yet ten million citizens born on our soil, in every way having the same political rights as the other seventy-six millions and paying taxes upon hundreds of millions of property and taking part with high honor in the Nation's wars, are absolutely debarred from representation at Washington.

TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION.

Of 391 Congressmen and 92 Senators that frame our laws, not one is of this race. By fraud, intimidation and murder they have been and are now deprived of representation, while forty representatives of their stolen votes sit in the Nation's Capital. These representatives having robbed the black man of his ballot, are using the stolen right to legislate for themselves, and against him.

These great and far-seeing statesmen of Civil War times foresaw the evil conditions that now exist, and provided the remedy, while we, their indifferent and commercialized successors, stand by and refuse or fail to apply the constitutional remedy specifically designed to destroy this infamous law-breaking conspiracy. They forbade race discrimination in the right of suffrage, and provided the penalty of reducing the

representation of any State denying or abridging the right of suffrage.

REDUCTION OF REPRESENTATION A REMEDY.

There are brave white men in the South who would grant justice to the black race, if the North would lead, and in no way can they be so helped as to proportionately reduce representation in the States that refuse suffrage to the black man.

When the Southern States began to enact legislation by which the negro was deprived of the privilege of voting, those who advocated these dishonest measures urged, many of them sincerely, that by thus taking the negroes out of politics, better and kindlier relations would be established between the races. It has not worked that way; indeed, we should have known that it would not. The drift has been steadily in the direction of a wider separation and more unfriendly relations between the whites and the blacks.

The Southern whites, now in absolute control, are determined to prevent the negroes from voting, even if fraud, intimidation and murder continue to be necessary to accomplish it, while the negroes are growing in their determination to secure the rights, guaranteed to them by the Constitution of the United States.

BALLOT ONLY DEFENCE OF THE WEAK.

Let us recall to our fellow citizens that the great Franklin said: "You may take away the ballot from the rich and strong, for they can get along without it, but you must never take it from the poor and weak, for that is their one defense in a republic."

With the exercise of the voting power comes everything—freedom, manhood, rights, proper consideration, protection for life, property and the family—yes, protection for the wives and daughters of black men. The astonishing facts in this connection are that colored men have been charged with assaulting white women and have been lynched for it, but who **ever** heard of white men being lynched or punished for assaulting

colored women, and it would seem that this latter happens far more frequently than the first.

INADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR COLORED WOMEN.

Furthermore, a black man who repels an insult to his wife or sister in some sections of our land does it at the peril of his life, and the colored woman who resents insults from white men does so at the peril of her life. Recently in Rome, Ga., a white man shot a negro woman who resented his attentions. His bail was fixed at \$100. Commenting on this, *The Vicksburg American* says, with great candor:

"This short item presents the whole of the negro's side of the race problem in a nutshell. It is the logical outcome of the determination of the whites to demand all and give nothing. We condemn the negroes for immorality; we preach sermons, and write editorials about the duty of the race to elevate itself, and answer with the shotgun when they try to do so. One of our favorite preachments to them is that the morality of its women is the cornerstone of a race's excellence, and yet the negro woman, pursued or insulted by a white man, must submit or run the risk of being shot down."

NORTHERN PREJUDICE.

While this evil is rapidly gaining ground in the South we must not shut our eyes to the fact that this prejudice against the colored man appears to be growing stronger in some sections of the North. In some communities they are not permitted to work as motormen or conductors on street railways, nor as trainmen on steam railways, nor as artisans. It is to be feared that there are a great many people at the North, especially in those communities into which Southern people have moved, who are more than willing to deprive the colored man of all opportunities of livelihood and manhood. How is it in the South? What are the facts?

Colored men, men with degrees from American and European colleges and universities, physicians of distinction, hundreds of whom met in Philadelphia recently in a great

convention, preachers of character and fame, college professors and college presidents, bank presidents and successful merchants, all are forbidden to ride in cars with white people, and are obliged to ride in what are known as "Jim Crow" cars. This has all been brought about in very recent years.

SOUTHERN VIEW NOT UP TO DATE.

Leading Southerners—such as Senator-elect John Sharpe Williams, of Mississippi, in the November *Metropolitan Magazine*—in carefully prepared articles and in public speeches, declare that they know the negro, for they live with him, and we in the North do not know him. The contrary is true. They know only the plantation negro and the house servants. They do not know these educated, public spirited, large minded leaders of the black race. How can they? They shut their eyes to the wonderful advancement of thousands of the colored race. These so-called white leaders are fifty years behind the times. They live in the past and talk in the past; they have not changed, and think that the colored men have not changed.

SAME OLD CRY "LET US ALONE."

The "sublime assurance" that usually accompanies ignorance is found in the speeches and acts of these white leaders. With the habit of all wrongdoers, from the beginning of the world till now, they shout: "Let us alone—we are not doing anything wrong." By a continual exaggeration of the colored man's vices and a studied suppression of the proofs of his advancement the leaders of the Southern whites are trying to make us believe that they are the martyrs and the negro is a brute. By the scarecrow of threatened social equality and the bugaboo of negro domination they have poisoned their own section, and the poison is spreading north.

What is the real reason for these things? Simply as Carl Schurz said: "A bitter determination exists to crush and keep down the colored man." The old statement that "he belongs to an inferior race and should be kept in slavery" is now used

as an excuse to rob him of his rights and misappropriate his political power.

HYPOCRISY AND SUBTERFUGE.

Stripped of hypocrisy and subterfuge and, in all its nakedness, this new American creed says: "Let no black men be given an opportunity to rise, lest they become the equal of the whites." Shouting vociferously and constantly that the black is an inferior race, the demand is that the negro shall not have an opportunity to rise in the world. Thus it is that this bitter animosity seems to be directed, not against the most ignorant and abased of the black race, but against the most influential, the best educated, well-dressed and well-behaved. No amount of honesty and thrift, or culture of head, or hand, or heart, can make them safe from insult, injury, and even death. The men who commit these acts, and the defenders of such actions, say: "If the nigger tries to be like us white folks, he must be struck down—he must be taught to keep his place." It is a brutal, despicable, indefensible and un-American attitude, and as President Harrison so aptly said, will bring our posterity to a heritage of woe unless we meet the issue bravely, right this national wrong, and avert a real national danger.

GOD NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS.

Because we live in America and become accustomed to this attempt to keep down the negroes, we must not forget that they have the sympathy of the whole civilized world in their efforts to rise; that the human race generally does not look down upon a man or despise him or hate him, because of his skin color. In the sacred writings of both the Old Testament and the New, it is affirmed that God is no respecter of persons, and we believe His desire to be that His children, both black and white, should live together in this world in peace, justice and mutual helpfulness.

There are portions of our country which are declared by foreign observers to be as uncivilized as any in the whole world. In what other country have men been killed for the color of their skins, as was done in Atlanta, Ga., where men

rushed into barber shops and killed men while at work at their trade, because they were black?

In Arkansas, recently, two young colored girls were killed by white men, according to the accounts published in their own local papers, because they had slapped a white boy's face.

AN EX-CONFEDERATE'S SANE VIEW.

Former Governor Northern, of Georgia, a citizen of the highest standing, an ex-Confederate soldier, a loyal Democrat, identified with public movements for the benefit of his State, and probably understanding conditions in the South as well as any man living, in a recent speech on the subject of murdering negroes, said: "Many are trying to belittle this great question. It is greater than all the other problems combined. Just now we are lapsing into barbarism and our civilization is slipping from us. Something must be done."

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

What can be done to eradicate this race hatred and prejudice against color? We realize the difficulty that all peoples have had since the earliest records in dealing with race hatreds. This difficulty is increased because it has no reason, no conscience; it is rooted and imbedded in prejudice, but some things can be done and should be done.

We must strike, not timorously and apologetically, but openly and frankly at race discrimination and hatred wherever they show themselves, remembering ever that race hatred grows rapidly and that its ferocious and barbaric spirit must be exterminated.

CONSTITUTION MUST BE ENFORCED.

We call on all citizens, and especially the foreign born, to join in the demand that the Constitution to which they have sworn allegiance, shall be observed by all.

We demand the enforcement of the Constitution, especially that the 14th and 15th Amendments be obeyed now. These forbid the United States or any State to limit or take away the right of suffrage by reason of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, and if suffrage is taken away, the states

so doing shall have their representation in Congress proportionately reduced.

REPUBLICAN CONGRESS MUST ACT.

Therefore, in view of the origin and history of the Republican party, and its principles and policies outlined in its National platforms, and especially in view of its important accomplishment of incorporating the last three great amendments into the Federal Constitution,

Resolved, 1st: That the Republican Club of the City of New York reaffirms its previous demands for the enforcement of the Constitution of the United States, both in letter and spirit.

Resolved, 2nd: That we denounce, regardless of locality, all attempts to create race hatred and prejudice, and its accompanying injustice, as a danger to any community and a menace to the ultimate peace and welfare of the Republic.

Resolved, 3rd: *That we insist upon the recognition of all political and civil rights of all citizens, national and local, regardless of race, color or creed.*

Resolved, 4th: That we demand the immediate enforcement of the 14th and 15th Amendments by means of the power given to Congress in these amendments, which each specifically declares that "Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Respectfully submitted by the Committee.

ANDREW B. HUMPHREY,
Chairman.

WILLIAM GREENWOOD,
Secretary.

ADOPTED BY THE CLUB.

At a regular meeting of the Club, November 18, 1907, the chairman of the Committee on National Affairs submitted the above report which was unanimously adopted.

This report was prepared by Hon. Edward F. Cragin. The resolutions were added by the chairman.

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VII
VIEW FROM THE ELEVENTH STORY OF THE REPUBLICAN CLUB HOUSE
54-56 WEST 40TH STREET, NEW YORK, LOOKING NORTHWARD, OVER
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